

Japan Christian Activity News

PUBLISHED

BY NCC J

Editor:

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ISSN: 0021-4319

#607 March 15, 1984



EDITORIAL:

DEATH TO LIFE

Japan's present social trend follows the illusion that by increasing the country's defense budget we will smooth out the friction between Japan and the U.S. The national defense budget receives separate treatment from the national budget itself by the government, leading many people to believe that it is completely removed from the nation's projected spending. The Nakasone administration wants to close the book on post-World War II politics, but I believe that we need to go further and re-evaluate the direction toward rearming in which the country is moving.

Since World War II, Japan's political emphasis has been to guard the country from the cold war threats of China and the USSR. The Japanese have treated these countries as neighbors to be feared rather than trusted, which the government reinforces with its anti-communism ties and four billion dollars worth of aid to the South Korean regime.

The nationalistic fervor of World War II is making its entrance back into Japan, finding a place among the majority in society where apathy and pleasure seeking have dominated. Prime Minister Nakasone's official visits to Yasukuni Shinto Shrine give further credence to the enshrinement of the war dead as war heroes.

This present social trend stands on the extreme opposite side from reconciliation through Jesus Christ. The nuclear arms race negates the option of loving one's neighbors, displaying

instead mistrust and unfaithfulness. By resurrecting from the dead, Jesus Christ has conquered death and offered us life. It is our responsibility to choose that life, to deny the "peace through death" policy of the world, and to leave behind trends of destruction for the creation of a new future. "He who does not love remains in death." (I John 3:14b).

KAINUMA Makoto

(Translation/summary by JCAN, from Fukuinto Sekai, March 1984.)

NAGOYA THREE RELEASED

The three leaders of the Nagoya citizen's group arrested January 4 for their advocacy of day-laborers' rights (see February JCAN) were released on March 9. ¥1 Million bail was put up for each of the three, Mr. MATSUMOTO Hiroshi, Mr. TSUNOSE Sakae and Mr. KAMIKURA Makoto. Members of the support group involved in feeding and housing the homeless and day-laborers of Nagoya helped to raise money and collect donations for their release.

Mr. NAKADAIRA Kenkichi, Chair of Japan Amnesty International will be one of four lawyers advising the Nagoya group when hearings began March 9.

Donations are welcomed to help meet expenses resulting from the arrest as well as to continue the relief and advocacy work with day-laborers.

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FAITH ENCOUNTERING FROM THE WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE, TOPIC OF RECENT MEETING

"Encountering Christianity and Buddhism from the Women's Perspective" was the theme of the Women and Religion meeting in Kyoto on February 26, sponsored by the NCCJ Women's Committee. This was the first time for 70 representatives of both Buddhist and Christian faiths, including eight men and a Jewish woman, to come together for debate.

General discussion of the traditional women's role in religion was complemented by information exchange between the two groups on the progress of feminism in Buddhism and in Christianity. Six panelists prompted discussion on a wide variety of subjects related to women and religion, but time limited full exploration of all of them, leaving participants hopeful of future such exchanges.

The first panelist, Dr. OGOSHI Aiko, from the Department of Religion at Kyoto University, briefly explained the origins of patriarchal religion, and the movement toward its many present forms of patriarchal domination. As patriarchal influence became stronger, human functions and desires were judged as evil, and women's position in relation to men was debased. In Buddhism, as well as in other religions of the world, the female body is seen as dirty, and subjugated to the male. Buddhism flatly denies salvation to women, claiming that their gender and sexuality is incongruent with the purity of salvation. Salvation therefore, is available only to men. But in an effort to attain salvation, women may try to divorce themselves from their sexual selves and enter into a strict discipline akin to that of the monk life. Certainly this is less commonly practiced among women than men as a result of the discouragement women receive for their interest in seeking salvation on their own terms. OGOSHI suggested that liberation would come to women when their patriarchal roots were reclaimed and revived in an

appropriate modern feminist expression of faith.

Ms. NAKAMURA Mitsue, a Catholic, compared the faith examples of Pearl Buck's mother and father. She reflected that to the missionary father, God was a spiritual concept, separate from reality, but to Pearl's mother, the reality of life in China so moved her that she was able to identify with the oppressed in society.

Ms. OKUDA Akiko, a member of the Non-Church Movement, introduced feminist theology of the USA. She emphasized that liberation from male domination and from oppressive social systems would come through a critical analysis of discrimination. She suggested that there was much to learn from the women disciples of the early Christian church and stressed that the feminist movement in Japan, which needs to go beyond imported theology, is only just beginning to take root.

Ms. EGUCHI Miriam spoke on feminism in the Jewish religion, pointing out that Judaism is more concerned with daily acts than with faith or salvation questions, and more oriented toward group activities than the individual. The Torah scriptures protect women's right to land and inheritance. Orthodox Judaism practices discrimination in the synagogue as women must sit separate from men behind a curtain while the men are able to participate fully in services.

Buddhist researcher HISHIKI Masaharu discussed the Otani sect of Jodo Shin Buddhism as it relates to the Buraku community. Most Buraku people belong to the Shin sect, which has been the subject of criticism for its alliance with the oppressive social system of discrimination against Buraku. In its original form, Shin was a sect which took the side of the oppressed, but has since abandoned the cause of liberation to reinforce oppressive structures. Buraku indictment of the sect has led to some reawakening of its role in society, but as yet has not made any significant steps toward
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reclaiming its more radical heritage. HISHIKI drew a parallel between the goals of feminist theology in Japan and that of Buraku liberation when he suggested that both need to influence the future of Jodo Shin Buddhism.

The last speaker was OCHIAI Seiko, a journalist from Noto who is married to a Jodo Shin Buddhist priest. As an only child, she was the sole heir of the temple of her priest father where her husband presently serves. The temple maintains traditional perspectives of an old Japan, she explained, reflecting conservative and unchanging views of women as well. Since Jodo Shin Buddhist women are not permitted to become priests, OCHIAI's experience in the male dominated religion has been that of self-discovery as a woman. Women study to find meaning in the doctrines of Shinran, the sect's founder, and to apply those teachings to their particular lives.

The conclusion of the meeting focused on the comparison of Christian and Buddhist concepts of God and salvation, and the role of feminism in each religion. Through sharing personal experiences, discussion moved toward the importance of mutual support of each other's struggle. The participants strongly felt the need to re-interpret both Buddhist and Biblical teaching from the women's perspective in the effort to effect social change. #

RACISM AND MINORITY DISCRIMINATION FOCUS OF JAPAN-NORTH AMERICA MEETING

Representatives from the United States and Canada will join NCCJ participants in a Consultation on Racism and Minority Discrimination April 1-7, in Osaka and Kyoto.

Among the 30 participants from Japan will be Ainu, Buraku and Koreans living in Japan. Discrimination against these groups, as well as against North American Hispanics, Native Americans, Blacks and Japanese-

Americans will be considered. These groups will be represented among the 27 participants from North America.

Exposure trips in the Kansai area to Korean, Buraku and day-labor communities will be taken as part of the consultation program. The first few days will be spent at the new Korean Christian Center in Osaka, before moving to the Kansai Seminar House in Kyoto. Following the consultation, a symposium will be held Saturday, April 7, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Japan Christian Center, 2-3-18 Nishi Waseda, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160. The theme for this day will be "Solidarity of Japan-North America Anti-Discrimination Struggle." The presentation will be given by members of both delegations and is open to the public. For more information, please call NCCJ offices, (03) 203-0372.

The Racism and Minority Discrimination Consultation follows the Japan-North America Commission on Cooperative Mission Annual Meeting in Osaka.

NCCJ PHILIPPINE COMMITTEE FORMED

In response to the call made at the first Japan-Philippine NCC Consultation on Mission Cooperation in November 1983, the NCC Executive Committee which met on January 26, endorsed the proposal to establish an ad hoc committee to deal with Japan-Philippine relations.

The new committee held its first meeting on February 13 and elected Rev. ODORI Tetsuro as its chairperson and Mr. AKIYAMA Naoe as recording secretary. The staff person relating to the NCC Committee on Japan-Philippine Relations will be Dr. ENDO Masaki, a new staff member of CCRAI.

The Committee will immediately start its work as a follow-up to last year's consultation, including the publication of the Consultation report. It will also work out detailed programme of activities covering the period until the next NCCJ General Assembly in March 1985.

by KURATA Masahiko

JAPAN-WEST GERMANY FOCUS ON PEACE

A report of the Japan-West Germany Church Consultation held in July 1983 in Japan has just been released from Shinkyō Publishing Company. Copies are available from the NCCJ. Below is a report of the meeting by Rev. SHOJI Tsutomu, General Secretary of NCCJ.

Both Japan and West Germany began and lost World War II. Both are rich industrial countries; their industries produce arms and invest heavily in Third World countries. Both are threatened by the nuclear weapons of the Super Powers. What is the response of the church in the face of this threat? How can the churches of Japan and West Germany take their mission seriously enough to respond concretely to military and economic domination?

It was with these questions that eleven West German delegates and 15 from Japan met together near Tokyo July 13-15, 1983, for a Japan-West Germany Church Consultation. The West German delegation from the Protestant Association for World Mission (EMW) was headed by Dr. H. J. Held, President of the Department for Mission and Ecumenical Relations of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), and Vice-Chairperson of the Board of EMW.

Participants in Japan included three German ministers and one lay-woman who are working in Japanese churches, NCCJ West German Church Relations Committee Chairperson Prof. H. Murakami, NCCJ Chairperson Dr. Inha Lee, Kyodan General Secretary Rev. John M. Nakajima, KCCJ General Secretary Rev. Kunshik Kim, and ten others.

Under the theme "Ministry of Reconciliation in Our Societies," there were two sub-topics: 1) "Our Churches' Ministry of Reconciliation in the Debate of Securing Peace," and 2) "The Economic Power of Our Countries as a Challenge to Our Churches' Ministry of Reconciliation." In order to give theological basis to these

discussions, Bible studies were presented on the "Meanings of Power in the Bible." The consultation put emphasis not on the items of church relations so much as on the concrete problems and issues which both churches face.

Dr. Shozo Suzuki of Tomizaka Christian Center addressed the first sub-topic, stressing the shift which militarism took after the 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Suzuki continued that the nuclear control of militarism is the ultimate evil of our time, and the use of strategies such as "deterrence" and "limited use" are evil and mad perversions of victory which replace God with a bomb. At this crucial time of nuclear threat, the Proclamation of the Gospel and the anti-nuclear movement are inseparable aspects of the same mission. Suzuki led the consultation participants to commit themselves to peacemaking, not out of fear of nuclear holocaust, but out of a commitment to work for justice.

The film, Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Harvest of War was shown, greatly influencing discussion around the responsibility of peacemaking.

Dr. Ako Haarbeck, Superintendent of the Church in Lippe-Detmold, gave a comprehensive description of the peace issue from the perspective of the West German church. His lecture was persuasive, for his argument was based on the suffering of his people during the last war, anxiety over the possibility of war in the future, and the church's strong concern for peacemaking. He professed the church's conviction to oppose war in any form since the development of atomic, biological and chemical (ABC) weapons, and expressed the broad consensus of the church that the use of nuclear weapons is inherently evil. The church also works for human rights as part of a commitment to non-violence, and continues to oppose the militarization of daily life. The recognition that ministry should come before political commitment is also common to West German churches. But the road to such a united witness has not been a smooth (continued on page 5)

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one. There have been difficult debates over the ethical implications of nuclear weaponry since the 1950's. The Reformed Church stated in 1981 a confessional "no" to usage, possession, and deployment of nuclear weapons, while the EKD affirmed the attempt to assure freedom through deterrence by nuclear weapons as a possible means for Christians. The introduction of "The Confession to Jesus Christ and Responsibility of the Church: a Statement of the Moderators of the Reformed Federation" and the exciting debate which it caused was led by Dr. Haarbeck, one of the moderators. He concluded his address with a confession of hope through faith in Jesus Christ.

Concerning sub-topic 2), Prof. Satoru Kuze of Meiji Gakuin University spoke on "The Development of Economic Relations of Japan with other Asian Countries." His analysis focused on relations through pre- and post-war times and their effects on the unfair pursuit of economic interest, distorted "development" support for dictatorial regimes and human rights violations.

Prof. Gerhard Grohs of Mainz University lectured on the "Stand of EKD Concerning the Problem of Germany's Investments Overseas." His was a clearcut summary of the EKD's perspective of economic issues. Based on the model of "social market economy" of UNCTAD, the educational organization of EKD and Catholic Joint Conference on Church and Development, have worked for two principles: 1) all development aid should be based on the fundamental need of people: shelter, clothing, nutrition, health and education, and 2) those who are concerned should participate in the decision making. The Conference also opposed arms exports to Third World countries by German companies. After Dr. Grohns introduced a debate between Protestant businessmen and other groups, he explained some practical possibilities of church action, citing the case of Nestle infant formula and the



West German delegates join Rev. SHOJI in an exposure trip to the day-laborers area in Yokohama. From left to right: Peter Sandner, Shoji, Dr. G. Grohs, Dr. H. J. Held.

problems of Free Trade Zones in Masan and Davao. He emphasized the role of churches in discussing company policies and pressing for reforms. In this way, he seemed to lead the stand of EKD to a more practical and responsible one.

Bible studies delivered by Dr. Lee and Dr. Held were so profoundly meaningful that they are difficult to describe in a few short sentences. Dr. Lee's emphasis on the power which moved the Exodus from slavery in the Old Testament and the liberation of the poor and oppressed of the New Testament, and on "evangelical poverty" as a method to follow Jesus, revealed the essential quality of power in the Bible. Dr. Held expounded the Biblical understanding of the usage of power which is given by God as a blessing, so that it should be used not for oneself, but for the poor and powerless. This, he said, was the way to follow Jesus and to serve, heal and liberate others.

The delegations agreed to establish a committee to continue to study the themes and to assure regular exchange between the churches.

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RIMPAC EXERCISES TO BOMB HAWAII-- PACIFIC GROUP SAYS "STOP!"

"Militarization in Asia and the Pacific" was the theme of a meeting held by NCCJ Peace Committee and CCRAI March 9, at the Japan Christian Center in Tokyo. Mr. Kalama Akamine of the Pacific Concerns Resource Center in Honolulu Hawaii spoke to the particular ramifications of the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises which are conducted annually by a multinational military force, including the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan, and for the first time this year, South Korea is expected to participate. The exercises end with the bombing of Kaho'olawe Island in Hawaii. Kaho'olawe Island is listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Sites, along with such places as the White House, the Washington Monument, and the Lincoln Memorial. Yet, Mr. Akamine explained, it is the only National monument to be continually bombed by the U.S. Navy.

The Pacific Concerns Resource Center was established in 1980 following a pan-Pacific conference in Hawaii dealing with the nuclear problem. The previous conferences in 1975 and 1978, in Fiji and Ponape respectively, formed the basis for such an undertaking. The most recent conference was in Vanuatu in July of 1983. PCRC has continued to function as a facilitator for the present grassroots based nuclear-free movement, forming an international network of more than 2000 community, religious and student organizations. A steering committee representing each of the seven Pacific regions of PCRC meets annually to guide the foci and program of the Center. Those areas include: Japan/Philippines, Micronesia, Hawaii, Canada/U.S., New Zealand/Australia, Central/South Pacific, and the French occupied islands.

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NCCJ PLANS NEPAL WORK CAMP

The eighth NCCJ work camp in Nepal, a project of the International Mission Cooperation Committee, is scheduled for December 1984. To finalize plans for the work camp, HIRANO Katsuki and two other college students are visiting Katmandu and Pokhara Nepal from March 17 to April 14. The three will be working together with Japan Overseas Christian Medical Cooperation Service in Nepal. Projects planned as part of the camp itself will include the construction of sanitary water systems for villagers.

CHINESE CHRISTIANS TO VISIT JAPAN

Delegates from the China Christian Council are scheduled to visit Japan from September 22 to October 2, 1984. An NCCJ planning committee is preparing to receive the 10 delegates, and is raising funds for the travel and programs involved in hosting them. After arriving in Tokyo, the group will divide into two smaller groups. One will visit Nagoya, Osaka and Kyoto. The other will go to Sendai, Sapporo and join the first group in Kyoto. The entire delegation will then travel to Hiroshima, Fukuoka and Nagasaki.

Meetings which are open to the public are: September 23 at St. Paul's University in Tokyo, September 24 at International Christian University in Tokyo, September 25 at Keisen Women's College in Tokyo, and September 28 at Doshisha University in Kyoto. For further information, watch JCAN, or contact NCCJ at (03) 203-0372.

SATO KUNIHIRO ELECTED NCCJ VICE CHAIR

At a January 26 Executive Committee meeting, Rev. SATO Kunihiro of the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, was elected Vice-Chairperson of NCCJ, filling a vacancy left by Rev. KOMINAMI Shoichi who recently accepted an appointment at a church in Los Angeles California. SATO will continue to serve the Ichigaya Lutheran Church.

MOVING TOWARD EQUALITY IN NATIONALITY LAW

After long debate, the Ministry of Justice, on January 24, proposed a revision of Japan's Nationality Laws to the Diet. The present laws allow for nationality to be determined through the exclusive lineage of the father, causing the statelessness of many children born of Japanese mothers and foreign fathers. The change would permit maternal nationality to be passed on to the child as well, if at time of birth, the mother is a Japanese national. Along with this change, comes a revision of the Family Registration (Koseki) Code which has required naturalized citizens to adopt Japanese names. The change would allow people of various origins to retain Chinese, Korean and other foreign names in becoming naturalized. This is particularly significant for Koreans living in Japan who have been discriminated against first, in being prevented from becoming citizens, and second, in their effort to use their real names. Often Koreans adopt Japanese names so that their identity is concealed.

But these revisions, however progressive, leave some problematic areas. Maternal nationality may be passed on to children, with these changes, only if the mother holds Japanese citizenship at the time of application, and only to children under twenty years of age. This leaves a gap for the generation of offspring born of U.S. servicemen and Japanese women during the period of U.S. occupation. Many children were born of U.S. military personnel while Japan's Okinawan bases (presently 53% of all U.S. military presence in Japan) were used as jump-off points during the Viet Nam War.

Occupied since 1945, Okinawa's release from U.S. occupation in 1972 reunited the island with Japan. But U.S. military presence continues to exist side by side with the Okinawan community, in many ways exploiting its people, land and resources. There are some 4000 stateless, American natural-

ized, and Japanese offspring in Okinawa.

The International Social Assistance Organization, Inc., in Okinawa deals with various problems of these children of international marriages. Presently, there are two stateless people over 20, and more than 20 people who hold U.S. citizenship, all seeking Japanese naturalization. The proposed law revisions would not apply to these cases.

In the case of a mother who goes to the U.S. and receives citizenship after leaving her children with grandparents in Okinawa, the proposed law would still not help those children receive statehood. It is clear that the revisions stop short of meeting needs for all who are deserving. The changes do not answer to the problems of age requirement and delay-tactics of the application process.

Another problem is that of dual citizenship. The present law requires forfeiting one's former nationality in obtaining Japanese citizenship. If drafted into military service, the naturalized Japanese must answer the summons within one month, or lose Japanese citizenship.

West Germany, Holland, Sweden, Norway and Finland permit dual citizenship, having signed "The Convention on Reduction of Cases of Multiple Nationality and Military Obligations in Cases of Multiple Nationality" on May 6, 1963. The Convention became effective March 28, 1964. Among these affiliated countries, those with dual citizenship run the risk of losing one nationality or the other if absent from the country for 10 years. If one accepts military service in one country, that person would be exempt from service in the other. This Convention further secures the rights of individuals to relinquish one of the nationalities at will. Japan's proposed changes would require compulsory choice of national citizenship by age 22. Compulsory choice would inevitably cause problems for children of parents whose nationalities differ.

Written by ISHIDA Reiko; Translation/
summary by JCAN.

TAIWANESE STUDENTS STUDY SOCIAL WELFARE

Rev. Li Jang-Tsai and Mr. Chen Mau-Lyang, social welfare students from Taiwan, have been studying at Shikoku Gakuin University since October 1983 with scholarship aid from NCCJ International Cooperation Committee. The following excerpt is translated from Rev. Li's report of his experiences in Japan.

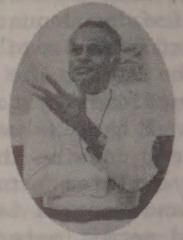
In studying social welfare, we have been able to visit programs in various communities. During winter vacation, we stayed for 12 days at a home for elderly people operated by Ehime prefecture. We also visited social workers of five hospitals, six rehabilitation centers for disabled persons, three mentally disabled people's homes, four rehabilitation centers for juvenile delinquents, and a leprosarium. We also had the occasion to visit a buraku people's community and a community center for Koreans in Japan.

According to Japan's statistics for 1982, the average lifespan for males is 74.22 years, while the female lifespan is estimated to be 79.66 years. This means that 9.6% of Japan's present population is over 65 years old. The government estimates that in the next 25 years, this will increase to about 20% of the population.

The 1983 Police Department records indicate 1000 cases of domestic juvenile violence, and 2000 such incidents in schools. Divorce and single parent families are becoming more and more common. There are some 1,977,000 physically handicapped people in Japan. I have been exposed to the continuing humiliation of discrimination against buraku (out-cast) people and other minorities in Japan, but at the same time learned of their commitment to work for change. The ramifications of the 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continue to be felt, while the threat of nuclear war hovers over us. With these experiences in Japan, I will return to work among the mountain people in Taiwan.

IN MEMORIAM: Bishop C. Lakshman Wickremansinghe (1927-1983)

A memorial service was held at the Japan Christian Center March 8, for Rt. Rev. Bishop C. Lakshman Wickremansinghe of Kurenegala, Sri Lanka who died October 23, 1983. Members of the Sri Lankan Christian community in Tokyo joined in the special celebration of this influential Anglican leader. Bishop Lakshman studied at Royal College, Colombo, and the University of Ceylon, obtaining a first class in political science. He proceeded to Keble College, Oxford and then to Ely Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 1952, after which he served on the staff of All Saints Church in Poplar. He was University Chaplain in Sri Lanka from 1958 to 1962, and was elected Bishop at the age of 35, the youngest in the Anglican Communion. He served this office until his death in 1983. Bishop Lakshman will be remembered as a pioneer in working for human rights of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICES HELD

World Day of Prayer services were held March 2 in more than 240 locations in Japan. With the 1984 theme "Living Water from Christ, Our Hope" some 10,000 women participated in the services coordinated by the Women's Committee of the NCCJ.

Tokyo Baptist Church hosted a group of 340 women while more than 230 gathered at the Korean Christian Church in Kyoto.

Among projects which will benefit this year from offerings collected will be atomic bomb victim services in South Korea, scholarship aid for women students to attend Asian Rural Institute in Japan, and a leprosarium in South Korea. Distribution of the offerings will be carried out by the Women's Committee of the NCCJ.

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